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***Kernan announces grants to support new jobs,
training of existing workers in Logansport***

*Governor also marks grand opening of distribution center
bringing nearly 800 new jobs to South Bend's west side*

Gov. Joe Kernan traveled to Logansport this morning to announce state support for two Cass County companies making investments in the local workforce that will mean skills training for existing workers, as well as the creation of new jobs.

In the afternoon, the governor was in South Bend to celebrate the grand opening of a new retail distribution center that plans to create more than 550 new jobs over the next two years, and add approximately 200 more to that by 2008.

"Our continued investment at the state level in our workforce is paying off, and we are seeing the results throughout Indiana, including here in Logansport," Kernan said during a stop at **M.W. Industries**, which is pouring \$2.2 million into its Cass County manufacturing facility.

"Through partnerships like the ones we are talking about today, we are seeing millions of dollars invested into our local communities, dollars that are aimed at strengthening worker skills and creating new jobs for Hoosiers."

To support M.W. Industries' growth, Kernan announced a \$26,500 Skills Enhancement Fund grant to help train 99 current employees and add 15 new jobs over the next two years. Additionally, the city of Logansport will receive a \$16,500 grant from the Industrial Development Grant Fund to help pay for the extension of underground fiber optic cable to connect buildings within the company's facility. The city of Logansport and Cass County also are providing \$73,500 for the project.

For more than 70 years, M.W. Industries has manufactured parts for the automotive, agricultural, heavy-duty truck and racing industries. The company currently employs 190 workers at its 472,000 square foot facility.

"The assistance in training and infrastructure will help us compete in the ever changing global market," said Dan Sebastian, president and CEO of M.W. Industries. "We all need to focus on the partnership between companies, employees and government if we are to be a player in today's world economy."

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While in Logansport, Kernan also announced a \$14,000 Incumbent Worker Training grant for **Federal Mogul** to help four current employees receive upgrades in computer technology skills. The grant supports the company's \$59,224 investment.

Federal Mogul, which employs more than 400 workers, makes electrical and mechanical fuel systems. The company is highly dependent on computer technology to manage its day-to-day business, which includes planning, scheduling, procurement, inventory tracking, product ordering and delivery.

"We appreciate the state of Indiana's commitment to employee training," said Craig Currier, Federal Mogul's controller. "As the governor points out, training of our workforce allows both the company and our employees to remain competitive in the global marketplace. We look forward to an ongoing partnership with the state in the education and development of our workforce."

In South Bend, Kernan joined **A. J. Wright** company officials for the grand opening of their new distribution center. The 500,000 square foot facility will serve as the distribution hub for the company's 70 Midwest stores.

"We're here today to mark the opening of a facility that's been more than two years in the making, and one that will have a significant impact on South Bend's west side," Kernan said. "The decision by A.J. Wright to locate this facility here demonstrates the competitive edge Indiana has when it comes to attracting jobs and business investment."

To date, 150 workers have been hired at the facility, which plans create approximately 800 jobs in all by 2008. To support the project, the state provided more than \$1.3 million in SEF and IDGF grants, as well as Urban Enterprise Zone tax credits. In all, A.J. Wright has invested \$41.4 million in the new facility.

A.J. Wright is a subsidiary of TJX Companies, based in Farmingham, Mass., selling apparel, home furnishings, footwear and giftware. TJX Companies is also the parent of Marshall's, T.J. Maxx and HomeGoods.

"Our focus continues to be on job creation and letting companies know that Indiana's doors are open for their business," Kernan said. "All over Indiana, we are seeing the effects of our efforts to cut business taxes and create a more friendly climate for investment. In fact, last month, the state assisted in the creation of more than 2,100 new jobs and helped more than 4,700 Hoosier update their skills."

The Indiana Department of Commerce awards SEF grants to Indiana companies that undertake capital investment projects. The grants help defray the costs of training new and current employees in basic work skills and company-specific skills necessary to support the project. The agency also awards IDGF grants to local government entities to help meet the infrastructure needs of new or expanding business. Eligible projects must be related to economic development and have the potential for job creation.

All businesses in the state are eligible to apply to the Indiana Department of Workforce Development for Incumbent Worker Training grants, which are focused on improving the job skills of Hoosier workers.

For more information on Commerce programs, contact the agency's regional offices at 800-463-8081 or visit www.indianacommerce.com. For information on DWD programs, call 317-232-3396 or visit www.workforce.IN.gov.

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